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Railroad Command of the North Korean Army

1. In July 1952 the North Korean Army's Railroad Command, whose task was the re-building of damaged rail lines in North Korea, was housed in confiscated civilian dwellings in Chaksan-ni (125-39, 39-07) (YD-2933). Under KWON Taek,¹ a 52 year old major-general, the command had a force of 2,000 men, armed with Soviet-made rifles and some light weapons. The organization was set up in early May 1952 and comprised four departments and three battalions. The departments were the technical, political, personnel, and staff. The battalions were the engineer, responsible for bridge-building; communication, which repaired communication facilities; and railroad, which repaired damaged or destroyed rail lines and bridges. Two army doctors and five nurses were on the medical staff.

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Train Schedules, South Hamgyŏng Province

2. On 1 July 1952 some trains in South Hamgyŏng Province maintained the following schedules: Hamhung to Kowŏn (127-15, 39-26) (CU-4966), departures between 9:20 p.m. and 10 p.m.; between 12:10 a.m. and 12:30 a.m.; and between 2:50 a.m. and 3:10 a.m. Hamhung to Wŏnsan, departures between 1:30 a.m. and 1:50 a.m.; and between 3:20 a.m. and 3:30 a.m. Hamhung to Tanch'ŏn, departures between 9:40 p.m. and 10 p.m.; and between 1:40 a.m. and 2 a.m.

542 Transportation Unit

3. In late June the 542 Transportation Unit of the North Korean Army, with 20 Soviet-made trucks, was in a village 4 kilometers northwest of Yongsŏng (125-47, 39-07) (YD-4133).² About 270 troops were billeted in village houses. The function of the unit was to transport fuel oil from P'yŏngyang to the front and to temporarily store fuel in nearby caves when necessary. When large quantities of fuel were to be moved, horse carts were commandeered from the village. When any vehicle was lost in an air attack, the unit commander, who was held responsible was severely punished and immediately replaced [] 25X1

Transportation Unit of the VII Corps

4. In late May the Transportation Unit of the North Korean VII Corps, with 150 vehicles, including more than 50 Soviet GAZ trucks, 30 Soviet ZIS trucks, 20 American GMC trucks, and some Japanese trucks, was at Pangha-ri (127-06, 39-04) (CU-3725). Twelve camouflaged vehicle shelters, each large enough to hold three to five trucks, were dug into the side of a hill 200 meters high and about 200 meters west of Pangha-ri. Assigned to the unit were about 370 men, including more than 200 drivers, about 20 mechanics, and a guard squad. The personnel lived in civilian houses in Pangha-ri and in caves near the village. A camouflaged supply depot, consisting of about twenty caves some 400 meters west of the vehicle shelters, was stocked with rations, ammunition, tools, oil, and other military supplies transported from Yangdŏk (126-38, 39-13) (BU-9643) area by trucks of the unit. These trucks, operating mostly at night and usually traveling in convoys of about ten, also transported supplies from the depot to forward units of the VII Corps.

Kowŏn Railroad Station

5. In early July the Kowŏn railroad station, which was under the jurisdiction of the Wŏnsan Area Railroad Transportation Management Office and was a key station on the North Korean eastern seacoast line, was on the main supply route from Manchuria. With a complement of 140 men, including 110 workers and 30 guards, Kowŏn station handled food, clothing, ammunition, weapons, and other equipment. In early July more than 100 box cars of rice, beans, flour, millet, cigarettes, army clothes, and ammunition were observed at the station, and loaded box cars passed through the station daily. Three northbound and three southbound trains loaded with munitions traveled at night and arrived at Kowŏn before dawn, remaining at the station during the day and leaving after sunset for Wŏnsan or P'yŏngyang. For camouflage, trains standing in the station were placed near a group of approximately 100 railway cars which had been bombed. In early July the railroad bridge over the Tŏkchi River, 1,500 meters north of the Kowŏn station, was bombed and destroyed, and trains crossed the Tŏkchi over a temporary bridge built with sand bags and wood, 45 meters east of the destroyed iron bridge.

1. [] Comment. According to other information, KWŎN T'aek, a lieutenant general, was commander-in-chief of North Korean railroad headquarters in April 1952.
2. [] Comment. [] gasoline was transported by tank car to the Yongsŏng Railroad Station for the use of Transportation Bureau units.

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